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SUBJECT: MEETING WITH MFA AMERICAS DIRECTOR TOUCHES OF  
POSSIBLE USG MEDIATION WITH CHAD

Classified By: CDA Robert E. Whitehead for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (U) In a June 11 meeting at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Americas' desk chief Ambassador Nasreldin Wali raised several points with Charge d'affaires, the majority of these focused upon the upcoming June 23 trilateral talks between the National Congress Party (NCP), the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, and the USG in Washington, D.C. Wali also broached the prospect of the USG playing an expanded role in brokering an agreement between Chad and Sudan. End summary.

¶2. (SBU) Wali spent most of the meeting reviewing the composition of the NCP delegation and discussing procedural ways forward on unresolved travel and visa issues. CDA said that he would flag these points for S/USSES and report back through the appropriate channels.

¶3. (SBU) The Americas' desk chief handed CDA a copy of the latest Reuters wire service piece entitled "Expelled US aid groups in talks over Darfur," which discussed the process of "re-flagging" expelled U.S. NGOs such as Mercy Corps to allow them to once again operate in Sudan. Wali said that the article had embarrassed the Sudanese government and was being taken "very seriously" within the National Congress Party, since such publicity was "not what we (the U.S. and Sudan) had agreed to" when the GOS gave permission for European affiliates of the American NGOs to work in Darfur.

¶4. (C) Declaring that "now is the time for peace with Chad," Wali said that the GOS wants the U.S. to serve as an intermediary to create a lasting peace between the two countries. He urged the USG to "put on the pressure" (presumably on Chad) as a first step. CDA observed that there were multiple roles for a third party in narrowing the distance between antagonists, ranging from passing messages to official mediation. What exactly did the Government of Sudan have in mind? Wali hedged on this and said that he would get back to CDA.

¶5. (U) Ambassador Wali's last point was that Sudan wanted the next round of trilateral talks to take place in Sudan rather than in Naivasha or any other outside locale. CDA noted that this raised the point of where in Sudan -- Khartoum or Juba? Wali replied that the NCP would be willing to hold the first round of talks in Juba. CDA replied that he would convey this to S/USSES.

¶6. (C) Comment. Wali's comment on a greater USG role between Chad and Sudan raised more questions than it answered. If a subsequent courtesy call with NISS Director Salah Ghosh, CDA raised this possibility and asked if Ghosh could provide additional insight. He admitted that he could

not but said that he thought this was a good idea. We will follow up to determine what this suggestion might signify, and who is behind it.

WHITEHEAD